

4. The broad gauge involves the greater outlay, and we have not been able to discover, either in the maintenance of the way, in the cost of the locomotive power, or in the other annual expenses, any adequate reduction to compensate for the additional first cost."

From these opinions, the conclusion is of course irresistible, that the narrow gauge is on the whole to be preferred, and that its uniformity is to be imperative, and if an alteration is to be made, it should be from the broad to the narrow. This conclusion is greatly strengthened by the fact, that there are of the former only 274 miles at present in work to 1,001 of the latter; and whilst the whole cost of the one alteration, including every possible expense, would not much exceed a million of money, the capital required for the other would be incalculably greater. To adapt the broad lines to the narrow gauge would be nothing more than to approximate the rails; but to convert the narrow into the broad would be to build new bridges and new tunnels, and, in short, to reconstruct the entire road.

#### RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

MR. ROBERT STEPHENSON has laid before the directors of the Chester and Holyhead line, a report upon the practicability of erecting a railway communication over the Menai Straits. It appears, that he has availed himself of the assistance of Mr. Fairbairn and Mr. Hodgkinson; the former so well known for his thorough practical knowledge in such matters, and the latter distinguished as the first scientific authority in the strength of iron beams. The result is, a conviction that a rectangular tube, 450 feet long, supported on stone pillars at both ends, will prove the safest and most economical structure to meet the difficulty. The works of the new tunnel, which is to extend from just above the Edgemoor station to the north end of Liverpool, are in progress, and will be completed with all possible dispatch. The Post Office has accepted the offer of the Brighton company to carry a bag of letters by every train gratis. The South-Eastern has followed the example thus set, and doubtless will meet with a similar result. Mr. Locke, in his report to the directors of the Richmond line, states that the viaduct across the Wandle is more than half built, and more than one-half of the excavation of the entire line has been removed. Several over-bridges between Putney and Barnes Common have been built, and the lighter earth-work and bridges are proceeding as rapidly as is needful. The only part not begun is at the Richmond end, but here the line will be formed nearly on the surface of the ground, and a few months will suffice for completing it after possession of the land is obtained. The line may be completed by June next. The directors of the Newcastle and North Shields state, that since the opening of their new line, 5,259,000 passengers have travelled on it without receiving a single accident. For a long time past, apprehensions have existed as to the security of the viaduct on the line of railway from Chippenham towards Corsham, and several workmen have lately been employed in propping and repairing the supports of the embankment near the station, in the hope of preventing any mishap. On Saturday last repeated creakings were heard throughout the day, and about seven o'clock in the evening the wing wall and part of the embankment under the up-line gave way with a loud crash. Fortunately, no personal accident occurred. Another slip has also occurred near Wootton Bassett, but it was much less considerable than that near Chippenham. A few days since, the chairman of the Colchester, Stour Valley, Sudbury, and Halstead Railway committee, referring to the non-attendance of two witnesses who had been summoned to give evidence, but whose employer, a Mr. Sargent, would not allow them to appear, said that in the event of their not presenting themselves the following day, the Speaker's warrant would be issued against them all. This threat, which involves very heavy fines and imprisonment, had the desired effect. A serious and savage affray has recently taken place between the English and Irish labourers employed on the Lancaster and Carlisle line. It is well known, that such outbreaks can be prevented by the contractor or his subordinates; such being the case, the greatest surprise and dissatisfaction has been felt at the neglect evinced on this occasion.

#### ART-SAYINGS—AFTER GOETHE.

*What is art-work?* You look at it—you gaze, observe, examine! Criticism may arise; but you soon find yourself in fault—not the artist. One beauty—one harmony starts after the other; beauty is harmony. You view the work from a hundred sides, from a hundred views, you combine these different radii—they all combine, unite, centre in one focus, one thought, one mind-thought. Wherever and however you probe, analyse, scrutinise—the artist has done all the same before you—for you. There is no getting at him—behind him; the best you find, after all, is to follow after him.

*What is "not" Art-work?*—What would be something—and, in reality, is nothing, absolutely nothing. You look at it! At every point and corner it offends you, pinches you, disheartens you. You endeavour to lay some plan, some harmony in any part of it. It will not do—nothing will ever tally with any thing; every thing contradicts itself and every thing around. If, in the former case, the idea seems to have sprung from heavenly brains—all perfection all unity; it is here, as if some infernal power had toiled and toiled hard; still, to no purpose. It is a work of toil, and pain, and deceit and conceit—but the divine is not in it.—*Genius nascitur—tandem fit.*

#### DUTY OF A MASTER TO HIS APPRENTICES.

On the 16th instant, an action was brought in the Court of Common Pleas, by the trustees of Marsh, who is the apprentice of the defendant Emmerton, for the breach of covenant in his indenture of apprenticeship, in not teaching him his trade as bricklayer and builder. It appeared that he had paid a premium of 25*l.* and that after being three years and a half at his trade he was quite ignorant of its more advanced arts and mysteries, whereupon his trustees demanded that he should either be properly taught, or that his premium should be refunded. This latter demand was refused, and the present action was therefore brought. Evidence was gone into to shew the ignorance of the boy in different branches of his trade. On the other side witnesses were called to shew, that he had every fair opportunity of learning his trade given to him, and that his ignorance of it was to be attributed to his own neglect and fault.

The jury found a verdict for the defendant.

#### Correspondence.

##### WESTMINSTER ABBEY—CONTEMPLATED IMPROVEMENTS.

SIR,—There is a passage in your correspondent's letter, signed □ (p. 47), relative to the proposed alterations, which I think requires notice. It is the one in which he applies the term beautiful to those outrageous abortions, the oak screens inclosing this beautiful choir.

As they are to be removed, I trust the dean and chapter will not allow them to be refixed, to detract any longer from the grandeur of one of the finest interiors we possess.

I am, Sir, &c. SAMUEL FIELD.  
Beaufort-buildings.

GLASS SALOON.—The Manchester Botanical and Horticultural Society propose to erect a new saloon in the gardens of Old Trafford, of sufficient size to receive the usual exhibition of flowers, plants, and fruit, and all the promenaders, and to be also available for lectures on botany, vegetable physiology, vegetable chemistry, &c. It is to be 150 feet by 45 feet; and 22 feet in height to the centre of the dome, or 32 feet to the centre of the dome ventilator. The whole of the front of this saloon is to be made of glass, and moveable, so that it may be removed in bright, hot weather. In short, the new saloon will have a back wall and two end walls, while the other side, and the whole of the domed roof will be of glass, covering an iron framework. Possessing an area of 6,750 square feet, or about 740 square yards, it will accommodate nearly 2,000 persons.—*Manchester Guardian.*

The new Wet-dock at Troon, Ayrshire, was opened for the admission of vessels last week.

#### Miscellaneous.

FORMATION OF PORTLAND VASE.—At a meeting of the Society of Arts on 18th February, the discussion on the Portland Vase was resumed. Mr. Doubleday, of the British Museum, who has repaired the Portland Vase, exhibited a number of specimens of ancient glass manufactures as illustrative of the theory which he deduces as the true principle of its construction. He imagines the blue body of the vase to have been first made, and then covered with a thin coating of semi-transparent white glass, by dipping it into that material while in a state of fusion. The vase, he supposes, was next placed in the hands of the artist, who by a process similar to cameo cutting or gem engraving, produced the beautiful designs in relief which now adorn its surface. He also stated in confirmation of his idea of the mode in which the vase was constructed, that while engaged in repairing it, he observed that there existed a coat of white glass underneath the bangles, at the points at which they are united to the vase. Mr. Pellatt and Mr. Christie, who were present, and who are practically acquainted with the manufacture and working of glass, addressed the meeting, and quite concurred with Mr. Doubleday in the view he had taken of its construction; but from their statements it would appear, that after all, the great merit of the work rests with the artist, as there is no difficulty at the present day, in manufacturing similar materials. Mr. Doubleday stated, that the bottom of the vase did not originally belong to it, and from the style in which it is executed, he should consider that there is a difference of 200 years in the date of their execution.

ST. MARY-LE-BONE BANK FOR SAVINGS.—The sixteenth annual general meeting of this institution was held on Thursday, the 12th of this month, at the office No. 76, Welbeck-street, Cavendish-square. The Rev. J. H. Spry, D.D., in the chair. It appeared from the several reports read to the meeting, that the progress of this bank continues to be of a very favourable description, no less than 2,418 new deposits having been made in the last year, 16,201 deposit accounts remained open on the 20th November last, of which no less than 10,628 held balances averaging less than 4*l.* 7*s.* each. Upwards of 356,954*l.* was then invested with the commissioners for the reduction of the national debt. The continued evidence thus afforded of the strong and growing disposition of the working classes to provide against the casualties of life, will prove a source of gratification to all reflecting minds; and it may indeed be hoped that this provident disposition has its influence in improving the character and conduct, this class of workmen being the last to be discharged whenever establishments are reduced from scarcity of work.

LORD NORTHAMPTON'S SOIREES TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY.—The first for the present season, held on Saturday evening last, was one of the most brilliant meetings that can be imagined. Men of all ranks and parties,—statesmen, philosophers, men of letters, and artists, thronged the rooms, and formed such an assemblage as is seldom seen. Prince Albert arrived soon after ten o'clock, and remained until half-past eleven. Percy's compressed air-engine, some magnificent specimens of "coated glass" of British manufacture, specimens of carving by machinery (two modes), and a nice model of the Temple of Jupiter Olympus, were amongst the most noticeable matters exhibited. To give a list of the men of mark who were there, would fill several of our columns.

NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT, &c.—On the motion of Sir R. H. Inglis, a select committee of the House of Commons has been appointed to consider "the present state of Westminster-bridge and of the new palace at Westminster, particularly with reference to the reception and accommodation of this House in the same."

NEW CHURCHES.—At a meeting of the Incorporated Society for Promoting the Enlarging, Building, and Repairing of Churches, held last week, grants were voted in aid of the erection of new churches at Westleigh, near Manchester; Macclesfield Common, Northend, near Peorith; and Walcombe, near Bath; also for enlarging churches at Stort, near Devizes; Bieford, near Driffield; and St. Edwin's, near Haverfordwest.